

## **Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee**

### **Minutes**

**January 21, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am in Port Authority's Neal H. Holmes Board Room at 345 Sixth Avenue, Fifth Floor, Pittsburgh, with the following in attendance:

#### **Via WebEx Board Committee Members**

John Tague, Jr., Chairman  
Jessica Walls-Lavelle  
Ann Ogoreuc  
Stephanie Turman

#### **Board Members and Solicitor**

Sandy Garfinkel, Esq.  
Representative Lori Mizgorski  
Michelle Zmijanac  
Representative Austin Davis

### **Opening Remarks**

Mr. Tague, Committee Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

### **Approval of Minutes from the November 12, 2020 Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee Meeting**

Mr. Tague asked Committee members if there were any corrections to the minutes. There was one correction, attendance did not show Representative Austin Davis.

### **FY2020 Annual Service Report Presentation (Ellie Newman)**

Ms. Ellie Newman, Manager of Transit Analysis, gave an overview of our most recent Annual Service Report. This report is sort of our State of the Union speech for our system. We evaluate every aspect of our service; compares Port Authority to other agencies and other cities. It is a comprehensive document and worth a look. As part of this we also evaluate service requests are submitted by the community. We prioritize these and rank them based on efficiency, effectiveness, and equity. This report is based on FY2020, which as you know is July 2019 through June 2020. Our ridership dropped significantly in FY2020, we were on track for a one percent increase in ridership through February and then ridership went off a cliff in Mid-March. We ended seeing a 19 percent drop in ridership from the previous year.

### **On the report it shows FY2019 vs. FY2020 Ridership by mode:**

- Bus ridership – 25 percent decline
- Light Rail – 91 percent decline in April

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**On Time Performance Improved** – four percent increase on bus and light rail. We installed a new On Time Performance System that we think is more accurate. We adjust the schedules every quarter to match the schedules to reality. When the pandemic hit there was less congestion and traffic on the road; our buses were not getting stuck downtown.

### **Service Standards Evaluation – July 2019 through March 2020**

- Passengers per hour – Identified low performing routes
- On time performance – Overall improvement; raised our standards; 77 routes did not meet standard.
- Crowding – Many routes had rush hour crowding pre-pandemic; 30 percent seated capacity

### **Title VI evaluation on all our routes**

This is a Federal program to make sure that Transit Agencies are appropriately servicing low income and minority communities.

### **Old & New Service Requests Prioritized**

- 46 new requests evaluated and prioritized
- 215 requests total
- Implementation on hold pending budget clarity

Mr. Huffaker, Chief Development Officer, said, one note that he wanted to address the flexibility, timeline and we have a long lead time before any service changes can be put in place. Back in June when we were finalizing our August and September service changes we were looking at an scenario with COVID-19, we had to make a call as to whether we were going to return to normal or if we were going to continue with COVID-19 scenario. We were a little nervous about getting caught without capacity if people did start to return to the office. As we all know right after June is when the second wave of COVID-19 hit in Allegheny County. We had to wait until November to make some of the changes.

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**Questions from Board Members and Others**

1. Mr. Tague asked is there a report on Access for comparison of 2019 vs. 2020.
  - a) Ms. Newman answered, yes that is in the report, about 50 percent decline
  
2. Ms. Zmijanac asked of the 215 requests total when we look at planning and budget, if we were in the perfect world and we had that budget how many of these will be doable.
  - a) Ms. Newman said the request that scored best is the BRT requests that have a cost savings and a ridership gain. A lot of these requests would be millions of dollars.